

12/29/61

LUCIUS D. CLAY  
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U. S. Mission Berlin  
APO 742, New York  
December 29, 1961

Dear Dean:

I have just read with much interest your "Fifty Years After" and, particularly, your concluding paragraph.

I wish that my stay in Washington had been long enough to have had a talk with you as you have expressed much more eloquently than I could what the real problem is for our country.

It seems to me that few realize that we are facing the ultimate challenge now and that, at least militarily, time is against us. If we do not have the courage or if we are deterred by Allied weakness in the short remaining period in which military odds are in our favor, what will we do when this is no longer true.

I cannot see any evidence that the free world is not prepared to concede more and to resist less as Soviet pressure increases. I hope that our leadership can stop this swing. We cannot succeed unless we take the lead. I believe we can succeed and that, in our own interest, we should seek the confrontation sooner rather than later. If the free world is unwilling to face the risk of nuclear war to save freedom wherever it is threatened, whereas the Communist world is willing to take this risk to expand, there can be only one outcome.

I look back to the fall of 1948 and the spring of 1949 when our foreign policy was bold, imaginative and successful. We moved then with you as Secretary of State to consolidate the forces of freedom and did not hesitate to take the lead in bringing it about.

Reeson Rr/65 / State Dept & WH Advisor 1962. Jan - Reg.

I am not being critical of anyone and I have confidence that the President understands the challenge. I hope our people do.



I could not resist writing this letter to you as I read your article. With high regard, and all good wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dean Acheson".

The Honorable  
Dean Acheson